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ABSTRACT

The Stull Act requires each district to develop a uniform set of written guidelines for use in evaluating competency of its certified personnel; at this point, advice from the certificated instructional personnel must be considered when developing the guidelines. The chief issue raised by it is, "Should legislators or other lay groups be permitted to intrude into the professional's province?" The intrusions have occurred repeatedly, with educators serving as convenient scapegoats. Whether the particular law in question, the Stull Act, becomes a positive or negative instrument will be determined by the spirit of those who must develop the means to reach its goal and the attitude of those who have responsibility for determining what is to be done with the results. For this reason, the profession must be concerned about the Stull Act to ensure that it does not interfere with the development of the best possible programs of teacher education and the requisite laws needed to produce such programs. The legislature must determine desirable goals, but it should not prescribe how the professional should reach those objectives. (Author/JA)

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An Address To The Delegates Of

The California Council On The Education Of Teachers

Spring Conference

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SHOULD TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE STULL ACT?

"Should teacher education institutions be concerned about the Stull Act?" was asked of teacher educators in the form of a challenge. However, we are faced with a fundamentally more important issue which transcends any particular law produced by the Legislature of the State of California. That issue is, "Should legislators or other lay groups be permitted to intrude into the professional's province?" The intrusions have occurred time after time with professional educators serving as convenient scapegoats.

Whether the particular law in question, the Stull Act, becomes a positive or negative instrument will be determined by the spirit of those who must develop the means to reach the goal and the attitude of those who have responsibility for determining what is to be done with the results. For this reason, the profession must be concerned about the Stull Act to insure that it <u>does not interfere</u> with the development of the best possible programs of teacher education.

In addition, the profession itself must begin <u>now</u> to prepare laws which will allow, encourage and produce the "perfect" programs of teacher education. The legislature must determine desirable goals, but they should not prescribe how the professional should reach those objectives.

The question - "Should teacher educators be concerned about the Stull Act?" is not the basic question for our consideration. Let's assume that we're all in favor of obeying the law, mother, apple pie, etc. But actually, the answer to the question should really stem from a fundamentally more important issue. The real issue of concern is, "should legislators or other lay groups be permitted to intrude into the professional's province?" Unfortunately, this has been done so often that it is accepted as a fact of life and without organized resistance. Many of you in this room have lived through the anxiety ridden years of the Fisher Act. Here is a case where educators were going to be "punished" by members of the legislature. And when the bill became law, we were accused of trying to sabotage it - drag our feet so that it wouldn't work. The facts are - our words of caution were ignored - the result was something less than a workable system. Professional educators had to break the law or the entire system of credentialling would have collapsed. This was recognized, as in excess of 200 major and minor changes in that law were made during the first couple of years it was in operation, and further changes have occurred. every law making session since that time.

When the Stull Act became a reality, there was and is great concern - anxiety - anger - because of the vindictive mood of a few public officials. Comments such as "this now gives us a weapon," or "we'll make them toe the mark" weren't designed to encourage teacher co-operation. This attitude does reenforce the belief that

some law makers could not care less what the teaching profession thinks. In addition, we're all familiar with the comments about foot dragging. Assemblyman Ryan's[1] farewell letter in the form of a resolution is a typical example. Other officials have displayed their ignorance in public about what they expect from teachers and administrators. One such person, after an evening of venting his frustration and determination to make teachers accountable, opened the session to questions and comments. A clarification question was asked from the audience: "So what you really want is 90% of the pupils to be above the 50th percentile in the reading test?" His answer was, "Exactly!" After appropriate gasps of surprise, disgust and despair, an attempt was made to try to explain the impossibility of his demand but to no avail. He simply could not be convinced that what he asked for was statistically impossible, and that there is no way to squeeze 90% of the students into the top half.

Input from professionals is needed to combat this kind of mentality. To approach the case at hand, let's look briefly at parts of the Stull Act which are pertinent to teacher education programs without consideration of other tangential implications and factors which affect results. Relationship to teacher tenure, overcrowded classrooms, poor general environment, dearth of teaching materials, lack of parental support, children who are not physically or emotionally able to cope are some of the factors which will tend to negate progress toward the objectives and interfere with reliable assessment. These aspects are of extreme (longrange) importance but

1 Appendix A

will be more appropriately treated within a broader spectrum of the problem. Basically, the law requires each district to develop a uniform set of written evaluation guidelines for use in evaluating competency of its certificated personnel and at this point advice from the certificated instructional personnel must be considered when developing the guidelines.

Generally, these guidelines establish standards of expected student progress and a system to assess that progress in each area of study. Assessment on a continuing basis is made of certificated personnel competence relating to the standards which are mutually established for each individual teacher or other certificated personnel. In addition, assessment is made of other duties normally required and not limited to classroom achievement of children. Procedures and techniques to determine that the certificated person is maintaining proper control and suitable learning environment must be established. Naturally, follow-up counseling and assistance must be provided for those who need to upgrade their performance.

In addition, a complementary bill (AB 2999) emphasized the fact that evaluation of professionals cannot be based solely upon results of standarized tests of pupil achievement. The emphasis is toward mutually agreed upon evaluation procedures and techniques; and here, the broader term "assessment" is more appropriate.

Now it's up to you to take a look at your own programs of teacher

education in terms of your philosophy and goals. Of course, we do not have time at this presentation to "spell out" every possible program, but perhaps this can be done at the discussion tables tomorrow. The Journal of Teacher Education, however, is a fine source, since it publishes many plans, modes and strategies for your consideration. However, I am reminded of CCET's former president, Wendell Cannon's sage comment, "the perfect program of teacher education has not yet been devised." And I might add - it is doubtful that the common program of teacher education should be considered when one takes into account the great number of skills and specialties required of teachers to meet the variation in the needs of the children they will teach. In addition, the differing philosophies of our teacher education institutions also militate against prescribed perfection.

The main object, as I see it, is to stand your program or your ideal in the light or shadow of the Stull Act (choice of one) and ask yourself this question: "Does this law interfere with the best programs of teacher education which can be developed? Or, on a positive note, does it provide an opportunity and guide for the development of better programs?" Therefore, the answer to the question "Should teacher education be concerned about the Stull Act?" is, in my opinion, NO, just so long as it does not interfere with the development of the best possible programs of teacher education. As teacher educators, I believe we can agree to the importance of the development of objectives and goals and the assessment of how well they are being achieved.

I believe that every law which affects us professionally must be examined in that light. The Fisher Act, the Teacher Preparation and Licensing Law of 1970, the Stull Act, or any future legislation will be valuable if the profession is involved in making the law since we have a vested interest in its development. On the other hand, it is possible to expose a silver lining in nearly every situation, and it can be done in the case of the Stull Act. Gabriel can make a law, but if Satan enforces it, it will be a bad law. On the other hand, if Satan makes a law and Gabriel enforces it, it can be a good law.

California Council for the Education of Teachers is an umbrella for this segment of our profession and it is up to us to demand of legislators that we be consulted regarding laws touching our areas of competence. If the laws are poor, we must take the lead to change them. In fact, our next step is to begin now to prepare the laws which will allow, encourage and produce the perfect programs of teacher education according to scientific knowledge and the present state of the art. We can no longer wait for lay people to tell us how to prepare teachers. Of course, we must communicate with them regarding the results desired (what they wish to achieve) but we, the professionals, will plan the itinerary and the means to get there.

APPENDIX A

By Assemblyman Ryan:

House Resolution No. 140 (1972)
Relative to the "Ryan Act"

WHEREAS, The Ryan Act (Chapter 557 of the Statutes of 1970) requires the development of alternative means of qualifying for a teaching credential in California; and

WHEREAS, The University of California and the California State University and Colleges are the primary teacher-training institutions in California; and

WHEREAS, There is evidence which indicates that these institutions are not cooperating in the development of alternative qualifications for obtaining a teaching credential; and

WHEREAS, These institutions are disseminating information which is contrary to the Ryan Act, and, therefore, is delaying the implementation of the act; and

WHEREAS, These institutions of higher learning are placing in jeopardy the academic training and potential licensing of thousands of students presently enrolled at their campuses; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, That the Joint Legislative Budget Committee investigate the actions of the University of California and the California State University and Colleges in the development of alternative qualifications for obtaining a teaching credential in California, and the actions of these institutions in helping presently enrolled students complete their training without delay; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Joint Legislative Budget Committee report its findings to the Assembly Education Committee and the Ways and Means Committee by January 5, 1974; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee.

Resolution read and referred by the Acting Speaker to the Committee on Rules.